

Silver Haired Legislative Session



Delegate Training Manual

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OBJECTIVES

**THE OBJECTIVES OF SHLS DELEGATE TRAINING ARE TO HAVE SILVER
HAired LEGISLATORS:**

- 1. GAIN A MORE THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF THE
LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**
- 2. LEARN HOW TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE LEGISLATIVE
PROCESS**
- 3. BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE AGING NETWORK, INCLUDING
PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES**
- 4. BE PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FIFTEENTH BIENNIAL
SILVER HAired LEGISLATIVE SESSION ON AUGUST 23 AND 24
AND**
- 5. BECOME MORE EFFECTIVE ADVOCATES FOR ALL OLDER
PEOPLE**

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZING THE OFFICE ON AGING TO SPONSOR, OR ASSIST
IN THE SPONSORSHIP, OF A "SILVER HAired LEGISLATIVE
SESSION" FOR OLDER CITIZENS OF THIS STATE

WHEREAS, the annual Boys and Girls State Programs in this State have been highly successful in enabling our young people to meet and study government, and to hold mock legislative sessions at which legislation of interest and concern to the younger generation is considered and debated; and

WHEREAS, the Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging annually sponsor a "Silver Haired Legislative Session" for elderly Missouri residents which is held in the fall of each year; and

WHEREAS, the participants in the Missouri mock legislative session are selected from the various aging regions and correspond to the composition of the Missouri General Assembly, resulting in about 200 participants; and

WHEREAS, much of the legislation debated in the Missouri mock legislative sessions for elderly citizens is later transmitted to the appropriate legislative committees or state agencies for their information and consideration; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a "Silver Haired Legislative Session" in this State would provide an excellent opportunity for the elderly residents of this State to participate in and benefit from a mock legislative program comparable to the legislative programs of Boys State and Girls State;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SEVENTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

That the Office on Aging is hereby authorized to sponsor, or to assist in the sponsorship of, a mock legislative session to be known as the "Silver Haired Legislative Session" to be participated in by elderly residents of the State of Arkansas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is the consensus of the House of Representatives that the Legislative Chambers in the State Capitol Building should be made available for the conduct of an annual "Silver Haired Legislative Session" in the event such session is organized to benefit the elderly residents of this State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon adoption of this Resolution, the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit the copies hereof to the Director of the Office on Aging of this State and to the Presidents of the recognized State-wide organizations of senior citizens.

Arkansas Silver Haired

Legislative Session

Authorization

The Arkansas Silver Haired Legislative Session was authorized by a concurrent resolution of the 1977 session of the Arkansas General Assembly. The Office on Aging and Adult Services was directed to sponsor the session and conduct it in the Chamber of the House of Representatives in the State Capitol Building.

Since the passage of the authorizing resolution, Silver Haired sessions have been held in the summer of even numbered years prior to the convening of the biennial General Assembly session in the following January.

Purpose

The purpose of the SHLS is 1) to have older persons participate in a mock legislative session, 2) to explain to older citizens the workings of the legislative process and train them how to have an impact on that process, and 3) to bring important aging issues to the attention of the state legislators and the general public through the development of Silver Haired legislation.

Funding

Silver Haired Legislative Sessions have been funded in part by the Administration on Aging, the Division of Aging and Adult Services and the Area Agencies on Aging.

DELEGATE SELECTION

- 1978 Delegates were elected by participants in leadership training conducted in each planning and service area.
- 1980 Elections of Silver Haired delegates were conducted at community meetings sponsored by the Area Agencies on Aging as a part of state-wide preparations for the 1981 White House Conference on Aging.
- 1982 Persons sixty and over who were interested in being SHLS delegates, and who had not served before, submitted a form with personal information and a nomination by a former SHLS delegate, AAA director, or other designated person. Delegates were selected by a committee composed of a member of the Advisory Committee, a former SHLS delegate and a State Office staff member.
- 1984/90 Interested persons circulated petitions to older citizens of their own communities, secured at least 25 signatures, and ran for election at county meetings. Through this process, 75 delegates were elected. The remaining 24 delegates were selected by Area Agencies on Aging from among former SHLS delegates.
- 1992 Delegates who had served in previous sessions were allowed to be candidates in county elections. This change was made to accommodate the large number of former delegates wishing to serve again. This method was used in 1994 and 1996, as well. Area Agencies continued to appoint three delegates-at-large from among former delegates.

- 1998/2002 The selection and election process was much the same. Former delegates were allowed to be county candidates. Absentee voting took place in some counties. Some counties opted to try absentee voting on an experimental basis. The Area Agencies on Aging sought delegates by invitation for counties where no candidates submitted petitions.
- 2004 At least two counties conducted run-off elections. Delegates were afforded more time to debate/discuss the proposed legislation by attending committee break-out sessions the day before the general session began.

Training

All delegates receive two days of training to prepare them to become more effective advocates for all older Arkansans. They become familiar with all levels of the aging network and learn about the Arkansas legislative process. They also learn how to work with elected officials and how to define an issue into a manageable piece of legislation.

Bill Preparation

To develop Silver Haired legislation, delegates use important issues identified during training sessions as well as the priority issues of groups such as the AARP, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, and the

Arkansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging. Delegate groups from each region prepare bills which are shared with all SHLS delegates before the actual session.

Session Proceedings

The Arkansas Silver Haired Legislative Session is a one and a half day event during which delegates meet in committee rooms on the first day to discuss and debate all of the bills and resolutions that have been submitted by the eight Regions of the Area Agencies on Aging. They then make recommendations whether to pass or amend each piece of legislation. On the second day, the delegates meet in the House Chamber for opening ceremonies, the bills for consideration are introduced, read, and voted on.

The House Parliamentarian works closely with the Division of Aging and Adult Services to ensure the SHLS follows the rules of the House of Representatives as closely as possible. The actual Speaker of the House presides over the session, and a number of General Assembly members participate in the session by addressing the delegates.

Follow Up

All Silver Haired acts passed by the SHLS are shared with all members of the Arkansas General Assembly and with organizations involved in working with the older population. If actual legislation being considered by the

General Assembly is considered to have been influenced by the Silver Haired Legislative Session, that legislation is tracked and its progress is reported to SHLS participants by DAAS.

How a Bill Becomes a Law in Arkansas

- Introduction
- First Reading
- Second Reading
- Amendment after Second Reading
- Referred to Committee
- Report from Committee
- Calendar
- Third Reading
- Vote on the Bill
- Emergency Clause
- Transmittal to the Other House
- Consideration of Bill by Other House
(process repeated)
- Bill Returned to House of Origin
(without amendment) (ready for enrollment)
- Bill Returned to House of Origin
(as amended) (vote on amended bill)
- Enrollment
- Signing of Bill by Speaker and Lieutenant Governor
- Transmittal to Governor
- Signed or Vetoed by Governor
- Filing with Secretary of State

General Schedule of Activities

The actual agenda will be made final and sent to SHLS delegates about two weeks prior to the August 23rd and 24th SHLS Session.

Wednesday, August 23rd 12:00 – 1:00:

Delegates will arrive at the State Capitol building and go to the 2nd Floor Capitol Rotunda for a luncheon sponsored by AT&T and AEP-SWEPCO.

Committee Work 1:00 – 3:30:

Silver Haired Legislative Session delegates may participate in the committee of their preference. Committee members will discuss the bills and vote on them with the recommendation of either "do pass," "do pass as amended," or "do not pass." Although not in accordance with actual General Assembly procedures, SHLS bills may be amended in committee. The final version of the bills will be voted on the next day by the ninety nine (99) delegates to the 2006 Silver Haired Legislative Session. The Division of Aging and Adult Services will have staff available to type and copy amendments so that all delegates will have accurate versions of the legislation to be considered during the General Session on Thursday, August 24th. There will be a reception on the evening of August 23rd.

Thursday, August 24th 8:30 -12:00:

The Opening Session of the Fifteenth Silver Haired Legislative Session.

After the Invocation, Song, Presentation of Colors, Pledge of Allegiance, and Welcoming Remarks from Dignitaries, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Bill Stovall and House Parliamentarian, Tim Massanelli preside over the reading of all of the bills and resolutions. Various sponsors will go to the well of the House and speak on behalf of their bills.

Luncheon, 12:00 – 1:30:

There will be a luncheon in the Capitol Rotunda sponsored by AT& T and AEP-SWEPCO.

Vote On Proposed Bills, 1:30 – 3:30

Adjournment of Fifteenth Silver Haired Legislative Session, 3:30

How a SHLS Bill Becomes a SHLS Act

Preparation

Silver Haired delegates meet in a regional bill writing session to write three pieces of Silver Haired legislation (bills and/or resolutions). They use their own ideas and prepare their bills in the required format. They submit the bills and resolutions to the Division of Aging and Adult Services for distribution to all SHLS delegates.

Introduction

Silver Haired bills are introduced when they are sent to the Division of Aging. They are assigned a number and sent to all SHLS delegates two weeks before the Silver Haired Legislative session.

Committee Work

Bills will be discussed in their respective committees in the afternoon of the first day of the SHLS. Each Bill will be voted on in committee and will receive a recommendation of "do pass," "do not pass," or "pass as amended." Amendments will be prepared in the committee and voted on separately before voting is done on the bill incorporating the amendments.

Report from Committee

Each committee chairman will fill out a committee report which lists the committee's recommendation on each bill. This report will be read at the beginning of the second day General Session. Bills which received a "do not pass" are dead and will not be considered in the General Session.

First Reading

On the second day of the Silver Haired Session, the Speaker of the House will instruct the Reading Clerk (who will be the House Parliamentarian, who is also the head of the House staff) to read the bills for the first time. He will read the "Bill Caption," which is the number, the title and the sponsors of the bill.

Second Reading

The Speaker of the House will instruct the Reading Clerk to “read the Bill a second time,” at which time he will read the number of the bill.

Calendar

At the SHLS, the calendar is a matter of taking each bill and resolution into consideration by going through the bills assigned to each committee chronologically. Example: Bills 1-6 might be assigned to Committee A. They will all be considered before the bills in Committee B.

Return to second reading for Amendment

Bills that come out of committee with proposed amendments have to be returned to the second reading for consideration of the amendments before the whole bill can be debated and voted on. Each SHLS delegate will have a copy of each amendment on their desk when the second day General Session convenes. The sponsor of the amendment (in the SHLS, this is the bill sponsor) will be asked to come to the well of the House to explain the amendment. Those opposing the amendment will have an opportunity to speak. The sponsor will be asked to close for the amendment. A vote on only the amendment will be taken.

Third Reading

The Speaker of the House will direct the Reading Clerk to read each bill a third time. The sponsor of the bill will be instructed to come to the well of the house and explain the bill. The Speaker of the House will allow those for and against the bill to speak. When there is no one else wanting to speak for or against the bill, the speaker will instruct the sponsor to close for the bill. The sponsor will ask for a “good vote” on the bill.

Vote on the bill

There will be a voice vote on the bill. The speaker rules on whether the bill passes or not. If he is not sure and calls for a standing vote, a majority of the 99 SHLS members (not a plurality of those in the chamber) is needed to pass a bill or resolution.

SHLS Report Prepared

Immediately after the SHLS adjourns, a report of the proceedings is prepared by the Division of Aging and Adult Services. The bills which passed are given SHLS Act numbers. All amendments are incorporated into the bill or resolution text.

Distribution of "SHLS Acts and Proceedings

The "Acts and Proceedings of the Silver Haired Legislative Session" is the official report of the SHLS. It is distributed to all SHLS delegates, all members of the Arkansas General Assembly the Governor and other constitutional officers, the Arkansas Congressional delegation, Area Agencies on Aging, state organizations interested in aging, and members of the public upon request.

Preparation of Bills for the 2006 Silver Haired Legislative Session

In most of the Area Agency on Aging Regions, bill preparation and writing, takes places during the two day training sessions. In some of the

Regions, Delegates from each AAA region may meet for bill preparation.

Alternates from each region may participate if the Area Agency chooses to cover their expenses. The date and location of this session will be determined by the Area Agency, which will notify all those who will be preparing bills.

SHLS participants will use the principles taught in SHLS training to prepare legislative proposals that are fair, realistic and specifically address the needs of Arkansas' older citizens.

The AAA will have a staff member available at the bill writing session to assist the delegates. Three items should be prepared in each region. These items may be bills or resolutions. The subjects of these items may be drawn from suggestions of delegates and alternates, from lists of priorities as

determined by other organizations, or from individual older persons.

All SHLS bills must be submitted to the Division of Aging and Adult Services by July 15, to be prepared for distribution to all SHLS delegates.

Similar bills from different regions will not be combined.

No more than three items will be accepted. If more are submitted, the Area Agency director will be asked to choose which ones to keep in the legislative packet.

THE 2004 SILVER HAired LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Silver Haired BILL NO 06 COMMITTEE C – Revenue & Tax

BY: Melvin Browning, Ted Ford, Arthur Kirby, Kathryn Dust, Robert Flannigan, Sr. (REGION III – AAA of EAST AR)

For An Act To Be Entitled

A SILVER-HAired LEGISLATIVE BILL TO HELP RAISE FUNDS TO ELIMINATE LONG WAITING LISTS FOR MEALS ON WHEELS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SILVER HAired LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

Section 1. Whereas, there are insufficient funds for the Meals on Wheels Program to support the needs at the present rate and for the future needs of seniors.

Therefore, a tax of one percent (1%) per computer game software should be levied which would be earmarked for Meals on Wheels.

THE 2004 SILVER HAired LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Silver Haired BILL NO 11 COMMITTEE A – NURSING HOMES

BY: Billie Massey, Billie Dougherty, Doug Ladner (REGION V – AAA
OF CENTRAL AR - CARELINK)

For An Act To Be Entitled

A SILVER HAired LEGISLATIVE BILL TO require nursing homes to allow installation of cameras in rooms when requested and paid for by nursing home residents or family and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SILVER HAired LEGISLATURE OF THE
STATE OF ARKANSAS:

Section 1. Whereas, use of the cameras would help reduce injuries and improve care; and whereas, since some residents fail to get adequate care such as with feeding, hygiene, bathing, dressing, toileting, walking and exercise, the cameras would prove instances of inadequate care, and whereas, many times falls, physical abuse, bed sores and infections are not reported.

The Silver Haired Legislators support the use of video cameras in nursing homes in connection with more management observation and frequent visits by family members and friends. Said legislation would be designated as The Willie Mae Ryan Act. Mrs. Ryan, a nursing home resident, was beaten to death by two nursing home staff members who stated that a camera would have deterred them.

THE 2004 SILVER HAIRED LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Silver Haired RES. NO 04 COMMITTEE D – Legal/Elder Rights

BY: (REGION V – AAA OF CENTRAL AR - CARELINK)

SILVER HAIRED LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

TO ESTABLISH “PRESUMPTIVE ELIGIBILITY” FOR MEDICAID HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SILVER HAIRED LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

While services are immediately in nursing homes, home and community based services may be delayed from two to six months because delayed eligibility.

Presumptive eligibility would give people desiring services in their homes, or a residence in their community the same immediate access.

This would allow the money to follow the client. A more satisfying life for the sick, frail, and elderly would be the result.

Making Your Point

A Format for Writing One-Page Fact Sheets, Position Papers, or Letters to Elected Officials

SITUATION

Present your issue in a clear, one sentence statement that will get the attention of the reader. Describe the situation clearly. Spend time drafting this sentence.

Make sure it says exactly what you want it to say.

PROBLEM

Use several sentences to explain the problem created by this situation. Now that you have the reader's attention, you should use specific facts and examples to show how the situation creates a problem for the people affected by it. This is your opportunity to convince the reader something must be done to change the situation.

SOLUTION

Offer a specific and clearly thought out solution which will remedy the situation you have presented. This tells the elected official exactly what you want done to help. It might be voting for a certain bill, drafting a piece of legislation, or asking for research into a subject that requires further study. Your recommendation gives the official a starting point for looking into the matter.

How Impact Occurs

Effective impact is the result of:

planned, organized, coordinated activity

1. By a specific group
2. For a specific purpose
3. Aimed at a specific target
4. At the appropriate time

Impacting Legislation on Behalf of Elderly People

1. A legislative proposal should be *good* for the elderly, *fair* to other groups, and *realistic* in terms of requests (e.g., for funding).
2. Both concerned and competent people should be involved in developing and writing the bill.
3. Adequate resource information should be available to justify the proposal.
4. The bill should be introduced in both houses by influential and respected legislators who have some identification with elderly programs.
5. Competent, experienced, and concerned person (or persons) should guide/ lobby the bill through the legislature and through the governor's office.
6. Legislative effort for the bill should be backed up by a well organized, statewide group who will, write letters, make phone calls, and personal visits to their legislators in behalf of the proposal.
7. With the good image that elderly people enjoy, the methods used in promoting legislation for them should always reflect sincere concern, and appreciation with a minimum use of pressure, threats or show of force.

Ideas developed from "Legislation for the Elderly" Workshop, Olympia, Washington

COMMUNICATION TIPS

TIPS ON WRITING OR CALLING LEGISLATORS

1. **Sit down and do it.** A message to a legislator can make all the difference. Remember, he or she is *your* elected official.
2. Address members of the legislature with due respect. Make sure the full name, initial and title are correct.
3. Address your communication properly.

The Honorable _____, State Representative

The Honorable _____, State Senator

4. Tell how the matter under consideration affects you, your organization or your community. Your message is your lobby.
5. Be brief.
6. Be specific. Let them know what you want. Identify the bill or specific issue. To you there is only one interest. Legislators must deal with hundreds of bills, maybe even several on the general topic you are contacting him or her about.
7. Be as factual as possible.
8. Ask for an answer. You have made your views known; It is now the legislator's turn to say where he or she stands.
9. Be sure to give your name and address.
10. Be polite. A nasty message can easily work to your disadvantage.

11. Remember to say thanks. After your legislator has pushed for your bill, a note of thanks will go a long way towards building goodwill the next time you want something. And there is always a next time.
12. The letter should be timely. Sometimes the bill is out of committee or has passed the floor before a helpful letter arrives. Inform your legislator while there is still time to take effective action.
13. Concentrate on your own delegation. The representatives and senator of your district need your votes and want to know your views. Some writers undertake to contact all members of the House and Senate who cast votes for other districts. Use your efforts to contact your own representatives.
14. Write your own views, not someone else's. A personal letter is far better than a form letter or a signature on a petition. Many people will sign a petition without reading it just to avoid offending the circulator. Form letters are recognizable; they usually arrive in batches and they usually register the sentiments of the person or lobbying group preparing the form. Form letters often receive a form reply, so it is better to tell of your experiences and observations or what the proposed bill will do for you.

Make the Most of Meetings with Elected Officials

1. Make your first contact by telephone and agree on a date, time, and place. Let the official or a staff person know the general subject matter of the visit and how many people you will have with you.
2. Follow up with a confirmation letter restating the date, time, place, the subject of the visit and the number of people coming.
3. Get together with those who will attend the meeting and decide who will discuss which part of your topic. Rehearse your roles (who is the main spokesperson, who will introduce the individuals to the official, etc.).
4. Prepare a one-page fact sheet with information about the main issues of your visit. Make sure it contains your organization's name, address, phone number, and other pertinent information.
5. Do your homework. Be prepared to discuss your issue, including the "down side" and who may oppose your idea.
6. Arrive for your meeting on time.
7. Be polite and cordial. State your reason for the visit succinctly. If possible, have someone in your group give a personal example of why this issue is important to constituents.
8. If you don't have answers to the official's questions, offer to do the necessary research.
9. Preparation and organization will allow you to make the most of the allotted time. Stay on your issue and do not bring up past issues or disagreements. Keep your visit as short as possible.
10. Thank the official for his/her time. Offer to find out more information if desired. Leave your information sheet for him/her to use for future reference about your group.
11. Follow up after your visit with a thank you letter.

Some Basic Principles for Working on Legislation

We should:

1. Accept the premise that legislators and related government officials are good people who want to do what is good and right as they see it. (Our opportunity here is to help them see our priorities as good and right for the elderly.)
2. Work with legislators and related officials well in advance of the legislative session to explain what our priorities are, why these are important to elderly people, and why we are enlisting their help in sponsoring and trying to pass our proposed legislation.
3. Accept the fact that legislators can not be expected to support all legislation that we or any other organization may propose. (We should be thankful of that which they can support.)
4. Keep "all doors open." A legislator may oppose some of our legislation this session but could be one of our best supporters in the next session. He could oppose one item early in the session and support other items later in the session. Do not make a "black list" of legislators who did not support our bills. This is a negative approach and a very poor method of trying to obtain their help on future legislation. Keep the "doors open."
5. Maintain a positive attitude and outlook even when one or more of our bills has been defeated. Try to understand that the legislative process or system is designed in such a way that it is much easier to sidetrack and kill bills than it is to pass them. Our system is designed to respond to the wishes of the majority, and sometimes even our best legislative proposals may not appear to be in the best interest of the majority.
6. Express appreciation to legislators who were helpful in our legislative program whether or not they were successful in getting a bill passed. This may be done in person or with a follow-up letter. Letters are tangible evidence of your appreciation.

Prepared for NRTA/AARP Legislative Committees by
Dewey S. Lantrip and A. H. McDonnell (1980)



Silver Haired Legislative Session

Sponsored by
Arkansas Department of Health and
Human Services
Division of Aging and Adult Services
and
Arkansas Area Agencies on Aging